Statement on the Earthquake in Turkey's Bingol Province
May 3, 2003

I extend my condolences to those injured and to the families of the victims of the recent earthquake in Turkey's Bingol Province. I am particularly saddened by the number of children who were killed and injured. The thoughts and prayers of the American people are with those directly affected by this tragedy and with the entire Turkish nation. The United States stands ready to help in any way possible.

Remarks in Little Rock, Arkansas
May 5, 2003

Thank you so very much. So I'm on my way back from Crawford to Washington, and what the heck, I thought I'd stop into Arkansas. [*Laughter*] It's great to be back in Arkansas, a land full of really decent people. And it's—as you know, I was honored to be the Governor of the great State of Texas, and some of my best trips were into the State of Arkansas when I was down there. And I'm glad to be back. And thank you all for coming.

Before we begin, I do want to say how— I express my sincerest condolences to the victims of the tornadoes that ripped through Arkansas and Kansas and Missouri, Tennessee, Nebraska, and South Dakota. Our prayers— and I hope your prayers—are with those who—loved ones who lost life or those who lost their home. The Federal Government— the local—State and local authorities need to know the Federal Government will be moving as quickly as we possibly can to provide help where help is needed and where help is justified. Nature is awfully tough at times. And the best thing we can do right now is to pray for those who have suffered.

I had a good time on our ranch. One of the guests that we had down there was the Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, and his wife. The reason why we welcomed them there is because Australia is an important ally of ours. Australia is a strong friend of the United States of America. The Australians fought beside our forces in Iraq.

They were a part of our coalition, a coalition that believes in peace and security, a coalition which believes every person ought to be free. They rose to their responsibilities as a free nation. Because of their hard work and because of the bravery and skill of our military and because of the bravery and skill of our coalition, America is more secure; the world is more peaceful; and the Iraqi people are free.

When I get back to Washington, Congress has got important business to finish. I want to talk about some of that business here today. Four months ago, I sent the United States Congress a jobs-and-growth package that would provide tax relief to American workers and families.

Last Friday, we got some troubling economic news. The unemployment rate is now at 6 percent. This news ought to serve as a clear signal to the United States Congress that we need a bold economic recovery plan, so people in America who want to work can find a job. And part of a good economic plan must understand the importance of small business. And that's why I went to a roundtable discussion that Richard talked about, so I could hear from small-business owners and employees of small businesses, the entrepreneurs of America that make this economy go.

By far, the vast majority of new jobs in America are created by small-business owners, so we spent time listening to small-business owners here in the State of Arkansas. And I want to thank you all very much for sharing your stories and talking about your hopes and your aspirations and your dreams for your companies.

I also want to thank Hector Barreto, who is the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, for joining us here today. Hector, I'm glad you're here. You're doing a fine job of making sure the ownership society spreads its roots throughout all of society in America, that the entrepreneurial spirit is strong not only in traditional parts of our society but for anybody who wants to start their own business, they get a opportunity to do so here in America. And the SBA helps provide those opportunities for people.

I also want to thank your Lieutenant Governor, Win Rockefeller, for joining us. Win